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ABSTRACT

The author discusses 12 principles for helping K-12 students develop values. The principles are: watch your modeling; help students feel secure and cared for; help students feel capable and appreciated; accept student confusions with empathy; encourage the sharing of confusions; make learning a living process; introduce neglected life issues for deliberation; encourage students to include choosing, prizing, and acting in deliberations; expand awareness of consequences; be forthright about your own values; develop skills for managing inner processes; and communicate hope and trust in life. The various principles in action are illustrated by having elementary and secondary teachers in many different subject areas describe the valuing techniques that they have successfully used in the classroom. The discussions also contain quotes from teachers and provide questions which teachers can use as checklists. (Author/RM)

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Fastback 91

What I've Learned About Values Education

Merrill Harmin

PHI DELTA KAPPA EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION

MERRILL HARMIN

Merrill Harmin is a professor of education at Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville. He says he does a lot of wondering. He wonders especially what humanness can be, and what a teacher can do about it all.

He also wonders why the New York Jets are not more successful, what he should do about all the undone chores around the house, and why *his* daughter, of all people, should want to smoke cigarettes.

He has published two series of curriculum materials: *People Projects* for elementary students (Addison Wesley) and, for all students and adults, *Making Sense of Our Lives* (Argus Communications).

His latest work is *How to Get Rid of Emotions That Give You a Pain in the Neck* (Argus Communications).

This books is dedicated to my wise values teacher, Louis E. Raths.

Series Editor, Donald W. Robinson

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What I've Learned About Values Education

By Merrill Harmin

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Values in Today's World

When it comes to values, there is good news and bad news. The bad news is familiar: Our old value structure has become unglued and nothing firm has replaced it. Traditional virtues such as hard work, thrift, family stability, and flag-waving patriotism are now widely questioned. Many people, and especially our young people, are confused not only about what they should value but about how anyone in a wobbly world like ours can live a value-directed life.

Now for the good news: All this questioning increases possibilities for progress. It gives us more hope that we will finally do something about the old culture's chronic ills—poverty, warfare, and pollution are examples enough. Questioning the world's problems makes it easier for us to identify the best parts of the old ways, shuck off the not-so-good parts, add some new goods, and come up with an improved social order. If today's breezes are stirring value uncertainty, they are also whiffing along social evolution.

But what do we do in this situation to help students distinguish good from bad, worthy from unworthy, and right from wrong? Can we do anything useful? Take Nellie, for example. Nellie is confused about whether or not to save money. Her mind hears messages on both sides of the issue. She admires the way her parents save their pennies, and she understands how prudent it would be to have money in the bank. Yet she is tempted by all the advertisements encouraging spending, not saving, and she has little faith that one can plan for the future in this unpredictable world. What value should Nellie place on saving? She is not at all certain. The question for us is, What can we do to help Nellie with this values issue? Or more generally, What can we do to help any young person with values questions in today's world?

I'm glad you asked, for that's what this fastback is about. It outlines what I have come to understand about helping young

people with values development. What I recommend is presented below in 12 principles. Why 12? No important reason. It is just my way of conveniently breaking up and presenting what I have learned. The separate principles must, of course, be blended into a whole experience for whole persons, so I trust you will use the list below merely as a guide to what really is a whole message.

A final pinch of good news before the principles: Although the 12 principles cover my recommendations for helping students with values development, they also serve other educational purposes. The wholeness of education makes this necessarily so. When we help people with one aspect of their lives, we can hardly avoid helping them with other aspects. Thus, to the extent that you and I as teachers or parents bring these principles to life, we serve more than values growth. The first few principles make this clear.

1. Watch Your Modeling

Many of us keep alive an image of someone who is a model for us, a model against whom we regularly shape our own lives. Often, these models are our former teachers or our parents. Thus you and I present ourselves as persons who may well be emulated for years to come, even though we are unaware of it. It is wise, therefore, to glance in a mirror from time to time to see if we are satisfied with the image we see.

And here I am concerned with what we do, not with what we say. Models are defined more by behavior patterns, the style of everyday lives, than they are by explanations or professed values. So we should act out the best set of values we know and do that as consistently as we can.

I recommend special attention to the degree that we project ourselves as persons engaged in open-minded, thoughtful values searching. The times ahead, carrying as they do so much uncertainty, require a considerable amount of value flexibility. It is difficult to predict exactly how much or what sort of wisdom we will uncover in the generations ahead. Our young people will be best prepared, it seems to me, if they learn to take the position of persons who will continue their values search and refine their values as new data are uncovered or new social forms emerge.

Nellie, for example, may well be influenced by her parents' example of thrift or a composite television push for spending, but I would want her to be aware also of a model person who keeps an open mind about an issue regardless of what position is in vogue. Then informed and responsible change possibilities are built into Nellie's value system. Who knows if the economic structures of future societies will be better served by a careful conservation of wealth or a free exchange of it? Best if we leave the door a bit open, so we can learn and grow.

Thus it is useful for us adults to behave in a way which expresses not only the best values we now know but also a nondogmatic, good-humored openness to even better values if and when they are ever revealed to us. I find this guideline to be a positive factor in my own life, for I am uncertain about many values. I cannot base my values on consistency, so it is useful to be someone who is openly uncertain and honestly searching.

Are you satisfied with the values model you present? Here are some more particular questions I often ask of teachers:

- Do you exemplify someone willing to learn and change positions on an issue?
- Do you sufficiently avoid complaining or taking a "we must suffer" stance when faced with a school problem and instead take a more constructive "let's see what we can do" attitude?
- Do you like and appreciate students more than your behavior shows?
- Do you sufficiently act like someone who is enjoying life?
- Do you react to annoying behavior with too much emotional heat while preaching tolerance and understanding?
- Have you slipped up on the demonstration of any ideals that are important to you?

2. Help Students Feel Secure and Cared For

The above principle is hardly new to teachers, and you might use it here simply as a reminder to ask yourself how well you are doing with it. We can all get so interested in complex and fancy issues that we lose sight of the importance of helping children feel emotionally secure. Yet we know that little energy will be available to students for considering values issues when they are preoccupied by fears or by the eternal need to be liked.

Check yourself: Is there opportunity in your class for two or three students to work together and become friendly? Can faster students, for example, tutor slower ones? Do you sometimes go out of your way to welcome back a student who has been absent? Do you take enough time to inquire about the well-being of some of the more unhappy students? Is your tone with students as personal and caring as you would like it to be? And, most fundamentally, have you begun to see students as learning jugs to be filled, or do you still see them as feeling/sensing humans?

Consider this quote from Betty Vaughn, an experienced high school math teacher:

> On Monday I walked into my first class, which had been a difficult class for me to motivate, and saw not a group of students but 26 individuals. I brought with me from the weekend workshop a new openness and caring for individuals. It was a new and exciting experience for me. I told the students that I cared for them, that I wanted them to be comfortable and feel secure. I asked how many had a good weekend, how many were still sleepy, how many were hungry, how many were happy to be with us, and whether anyone had had anything bothering him or her that we could help with right now. I started all my classes in that fashion and in five out of six classes the students asked me about *my* weekend. I had cared for them and they cared back. Later on, the students were especially interested and cooperative with their math work. They listened better, they asked better questions, and for the first time, no one sat staring out the windows. We were together doing our math.

3. Help Students Feel Capable and Appreciated

If it is important to help students feel emotionally secure before expecting them to probe values issues thoughtfully, it is equally important to help them feel capable and appreciated. If they feel weak, useless, incompetent, and dumb, they can hardly be expected to take responsibility for value decisions or value commitments. It is likely, moreover, that students who feel generally incapable and unappreciated will have difficulty escaping vindictive impulses in favor of moving toward some of our more generous and socially productive values. Thus I recommend that we occasionally check ourselves: Are we doing our best to make students feel capable and appreciated?

We might ask ourselves if we can do better at:

- Providing a variety of tasks so that every student has the taste of success.
- Communicating frequently to parents the large and the small positive things that students do.
- Giving similar doses of approval for students who do "top-notch work" and for those who only "do their best."
- Arranging time and tasks so that students can help each other, correct errors, and occasionally get our personal attention and approval.
- Teaching students how they can say positive things to each other comfortably and honestly.

Turning back to Nellie, confused about whether or not to save money, I would say that she will be unlikely to invest energy in unraveling that confusion and committing herself to a value if she remains full of unmet emotional needs—the need to be secure, to be liked, to be successful, or to be recognized by others. These last two principles remind us of the primacy of these emotional needs.

4. Accept Student Confusions with Empathy

Imagine another girl, Sally, saying that she is confused about what to do about a nagging baby brother. The brother "just won't let her be," she cries. A teacher might be tempted to remark that baby brothers just do not know better and that older sisters must be patient with them. A clever teacher might try to do this by means of questions. "Do you remember when you were younger?"

Another teacher might sense that Sally will not easily understand herself or her baby brother until the confusions around the issue subside a bit and she feels more relaxed with it all. So the teacher might try to be accepting and empathetic: "You sure seem to be bothered by your brother." "You bet," Sally shoots back. After a bit more feeling/accepting dialogue, the teacher might simply disengage and say, "Thanks for chatting, Sally. Now you better get back to your workbook." But—and this is a point teachers sometimes overlook—there is no reason why a day or two later the teacher cannot talk with the class or with Sally alone, raising the issue of sibling conflicts and what one might do about them, so that Sally (and others) might later view the issue calmly and perhaps grow in understanding and appreciation of the values questions that are involved.

In short, the wise teacher often does not try to make an immediate lesson out of an emotional issue. Many value confusions are just that: emotional. Instead, the teacher communicates to the student that it is all right to be confused or to have these feelings, a message which allows those feelings to settle. Later, if appropriate, the teacher can look for a way to expand the student's vision.

Louis Raths, the originator of the theory of values clarification, often bemoaned the fact that adults were quick to tell students what to believe and what not to believe, as if students were not already sufficiently confused by all the contradictory adult models they see and the messages they hear. What students need more than

anything, Raths asserted, is not more messages, but more help in learning how to take some of the messages that already rattle in their heads, how to look at them cooly and calmly, and how to decide what to do with them all. Thus it is important to help students examine their confusions. And to do that it is important first to accept with empathy the confusions they express.

To check yourself on this principle, try this question: When a student says that he is bothered by some real-life issue, are you first apt to 1) try to get the student to understand the issue better, 2) try to reassure the student that things will probably work out all right, 3) try to communicate to the student that you understand how his confusion feels, or 4) something else.

Although 1) and 2) are sometimes the preferred responses, and 4) is often the best response, 3) is the one to which this principle points. I would hope you sometimes use it. Students need to accept their own confusions before they can comfortably study them.

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5. Encourage the Sharing of Confusions

We often feel relieved and less deficient when we know others are bothered by some of the same confusions that trouble us. That makes it easier for us to accept ourselves, relax our anxieties, and think rationally about what is or is not valuable. The sharing of thoughts and impulses—especially when it is done in a supportive, nonjudgmental climate—has the effect of freeing our intelligence.

Consequently, I recommend that teachers not wait for a student to give voice to a confusion. Many students may never do that. Instead, I encourage teachers to take a few moments from time to time to encourage students to talk openly and nonjudgmentally about their lives and the things on their minds, always giving an individual the option to "pass" to protect his* right to privacy. Such sharing helps students to accept themselves and each other and opens minds for thought.

This report by a first-grade teacher illustrates the principle in action:

> I had my class start off by talking about anything and everything. We did this for about 10 minutes. The children really opened up. They enjoyed talking about their experiences, and many of them found they had done some of the same things. This seemed to make them grow closer together. My class continued this type of activity for several days, and I plan to go back to it periodically during the school year. It was an open gab session, and the children loved it.
>
> Next, I introduced the polling technique. The questions were very simple:
>
> 1. How many have brothers?
> 2. How many have sisters?

*For clarity and economy, we use the masculine form of pronouns throughout this publication when no specific gender is implied. While we recognize the trend away from this practice, we see no graceful alternative. We hope the reader will impute no sexist motives; certainly none are intended. —*The Editors*

3. Are you the oldest child in the family?
4. Do you have a pet? Do you have a dog? Do you have a cat?
5. Do you like pizza?

The children then enjoyed making up their own questions.

The next step in my program seemed silly but actually turned out great. Even though all my children knew each other, I had them each make a name tag. Their own names went in the center. In one corner they drew two things they like to eat. In the second corner they drew the members of their family. In the third corner they drew the thing they liked to play with the most. And in the last corner they drew a face that would indicate how they felt about themselves. When the name tags were completed, the children were instructed to walk around and, without saying a word, look at the other children's name tags. After a few minutes I asked them to find a partner. The two partners then talked about their tag for one minute. Then, on a voluntary basis, they introduced their partners to the rest of the room and told about their partners' likes and dislikes. Boy, did we ever find out a lot more about each other!

Soon I will start the next step in my program, which is called support groups. I will divide the class into groups of four children each. After each member of the group has told the other three members about himself, I will give the group simple questions to talk over. The following are the types of questions to be discussed:

1. If you found a wallet on the sidewalk, what would you do?
2. A new boy comes to your room. How would you make this child feel welcome?
3. What would you do if your best friend broke a window?
4. If you saw two children fighting, what would you do?

After each question has been talked about for three minutes, I will ask for volunteers to tell the class about what the group discussed.

Another technique I plan to use in my classroom includes:

1. I will show the class a picture of a child who is happy, sad, excited, etc.
2. First, the class as a whole will talk about the picture.
3. Then each child will get with a partner and talk about what makes him happy, sad, etc.
4. Next, I will play a record that matches the feeling being talked about.
5. Then the children will get into their support groups and talk about how one feels when he's happy, sad, etc., and what makes him feel that way.
6. I will ask for volunteers to share their groups' discussions.

7. The children will draw a picture of something that causes them to feel the emotion we're discussing.

8. If some children would like to volunteer to share their pictures, they can do so.

9. Finally, each child will tell something he learned about the feeling discussed.

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6. Make Learning a Living Process

Value development is not a passive process. Students cannot sit and wait for values to grow the way their skeletons grow. Students must deal with choices, sift pressures, make commitments, suffer ambivalence, and use energy to grasp their values and live them. Let's look back on Nellie, for example. Let's say that Nellie sat back and waited for the issue of saving money to resolve itself. Perhaps, in the absence of clarity about whether or not she wanted to save, she decided to spend her current funds. Or perhaps she put some money in the bank for the time being, without deciding how long to keep it there. In such a situation I would not want to say that Nellie had a *value* about saving money. She has more work to do before I would say that she has settled this issue.

And so it is with people and values in general: They demand our active involvement. We must take them and live them. But young people sometimes learn in school that they should not be active at all, a learning that encourages value deferment, not value development. School may in fact treat students as lifeless objects, and thus may communicate that students are not important at all, that what they think or feel is not important, but that it is important for students to play institutional roles passively. When the experience in school is lifeless, it encourages students to be lifeless. And lifeless persons often assume they cannot make value decisions or that it's not worth the trouble of trying to do so.

Let us look at this issue a bit more closely. It is generally recognized that the learning processes in schools seldom get beyond the level of memorization. Many educators have not yet found effective ways to exercise student capacities for creativity, for critical thought, for artistic expression, for intuitive awareness, or for discovery. And traditional classroom procedures seldom get beyond the level of following directions. Students seldom develop capacities for cooperation, for decision making, for innovative behavior, or for empathizing. In short, only a portion of the student is alive in many classrooms. This leads many students to believe that it's quite accept-

able not to be alive, thoughtful, independent, or responsible. The experience of the schools tells them so.

The remedy is clear: Exercise more of the natural and existing human capacities in classrooms. Bring students closer to the state of functioning we see when, for example, we observe them engaged with their hobbies. Some teachers work toward this goal by using project work, discovery lessons, individualized instruction, open classroom formats, and hands-on materials. As students become more alive in classrooms, they will become more ready and able to develop their whole selves, and that includes their values.

The content of learning presents a related issue. When most of what we study in schools is trivial—names, dates, definitions, and details that we are ready to forget soon after the final exam—we may eventually come to believe that our minds cannot do much more than collect a bunch of separate facts, that we cannot make judgments or guide life intelligently. All we can do is collect crossword puzzle information. We may even come to believe that this is what knowledge is all about—that being informed about a lot of specifics is equivalent to being intelligent or wise. After all, if that is what the school teaches, is it not fair to assume that that is what learning is all about? The result, alas, is too many young people giving up on learning and knowledge itself. It all seems so useless.

Again, the remedy is clear, if not easy to implement: Focus student attention less on trivial details and more on the concepts, the generalizations, the life-related insights, and the learning processes of various disciplines. Help students to see that schooling is not dissociated from an ability to grow in awareness, to use intelligence, or to guide life.

I would go even further. Let me use the familiar Columbus story for an example. Although it is far better to deemphasize the importance of the names and dates associated with the Columbus expedition and instead to focus attention on the concepts involved, such as the relationship between economic growth and the spread of civilizations or the blend of fascination and fear that some explorers carry with them, it is better yet to add a discussion that connects the concepts with the particular life of each student: "When have *you*

ever been an explorer? How did it work out? What did you learn from the experience? To what extent would you like to be less or more of an explorer? Does anything from our unit on Columbus suggest something you want to do or not do when you face an exploration-type situation in the days ahead?"

My point is that sometimes we can extend a unit of study or a topic beyond the confines of abstract learning, beyond such general questions as, "What explorations go on today in this world?" and move to the particular and vivid questions in each student's life. "Are there any implications in this unit," we might ask, "for what you personally do today or in the days immediately ahead?"

Life can come into the classroom not only as a spin-off from an academic unit, as in the Columbus example above. There is also the life we experience in class together, the problems we have working and playing together, the issues that arise naturally because we are here and alive today. When a teacher takes time to help students study those kinds of issues and to learn from them, the teacher also teaches students how to deliberate and learn skills that serve them for a lifetime. In this example, note how the principles mentioned earlier come into play in this incident. A junior high school teacher reports:

> Another class has been a discipline problem. That Monday we had a heart-to-heart talk and I tried to use several of the principles that were given during the workshop. I wanted to let my students know that I was concerned about them as persons and that we had some problems that needed to be worked out before we could have a class that functioned as a whole. We took the whole hour to try to decide what to do to solve our problems. We talked as adults. I showed them empathy and encouraged them to help me by showing and telling me their problems and confusions.
>
> It was decided to try working as groups to do the homework assignments. I was to pick the groups. I decided to try some warm-up activities, hoping that this would help them to work as a group. Most of them took it seriously. We each took a turn telling about our families and hobbies. We said one positive thing about each person in the group. And we also told each member that we were glad to have him in our group. They seemed to be working very well for 14-year-olds.
>
> After two weeks, some members of the class wanted out of their groups because too many of the other students were asking them for

help or trying to copy and thus taking away too much of their own time for homework. So we had another class discussion. Several students voiced their opinions. Some were downed by other students, but I made it a point to let them know that I cared what each of them had to say and that it was important to me. During the discussion it was brought out by one of the students that I was doing a lot of extra work for their class and they were not appreciating it at all. Several other students agreed with him. I just told him thank you and said that I really wanted this to be a good learning situation. We finally agreed on what to try next and we went on with our homework assignments.

After class some of the students came up to me and said, "You are really trying to help us. You really care about us! You are the only teacher that seems to care." This is one class that has discipline problems all day. I told them that they were making it hard by not cooperating as much as they could, but I still cared and would keep trying to make a better learning situation. Several have realized what is going on and that I have changed and I feel very good about the change. I especially liked having them share in studying our class problem and deciding what to do.

Learning can be made a living process in many ways, of course. I have seen lectures on Greek history that have enthralled students, kept them thinking, wondering, listening, imagining. Those students were most alive. And I have seen pairs of students working together trying to construct parachutes who were also engrossed in their learning processes; they planned, read, talked, and cooperated avidly. On the other hand, I have seen lectures that only deadened the spirits and minds of students. And I have seen individualized programs and project work that elicited practically no response from students.

Each teacher must proceed in his own way, seeking a style, method, and content that allow students to be alive. Without such energy, I fear that students will be tempted to believe that schooling and learning are nothing more than a ritual, that life itself is uninteresting, or that they themselves should be lifeless. Such beliefs do not encourage students to invest in their own values development. Stated more positively, students who are accustomed to using their capacities in schools, regardless of what they study or how they study it, will more likely be ready to use their capacities when they face the values issues of life outside of school.

7. Introduce Neglected Life Issues for Deliberation

Even if teachers consistently directed student attention to the life issues related to academic subjects and to the real-life problems that crop up in school, we would still leave students with many values issues unattended. Therefore I recommend that we go out of our way to introduce for student deliberation the issues that commonly confuse young people:

- Should I be loyal to my friend when others tease me for it?
- What can I do about my impulses to steal or to lie?
- Should I clean my room even if I don't want to?
- What do I do about things that benefit me but not my family?
- What should I do about chores around the house? And school work that is a chore?
- What are love and friendship and sexuality, and how do I want to relate to others?

The list of possible topics is long. It depends, of course, on the particular students. What one seeks are those value-related issues that bother the students, that make life and value maturation burdensome. And the best way to find those issues is to listen to the students.

I recommend, for example, that teachers set a box on a shelf and invite all students to submit a weekly "thought"—a comment about schoolwork, about life outside of school, about something they did or something that popped into their heads. "It's my way of getting to know you as individual persons," a teacher might say. "Please put a note in the thought box every week, perhaps on Mondays as you come through the door. If you can think of nothing to say, just write,

'No thought for this week,' and sign your name. I'll give your thought notes back to you each week, sometimes with a comment from me, so that you can keep them if you care to."

It's fun to read student thought notes—it's not at all like reading and correcting homework. And most students will soon enough get the hang of how it works and what they might write, especially if in the beginning you read some of the more interesting notes to the whole class, keeping authors anonymous, if that seems wise.

When I have a thought box in my room, I sometimes put a small check on each note after I read it, so the author knows I've read it, but more usually I'll write a kindly word or two—trying hard not to impose my values but to be supportive and, occasionally, educational. I'll write such things as, "Interesting." "Thanks for sharing that with me." "Same thing happened to me when I was younger." "Have you thought about this option. . . ?" "Sounds as if you are real proud of that. Good luck."

Discussions on topics alive to students can be built upon thought notes. Just read some of the more provocative ones to the class when you have a few free moments and invite student reactions.

Another strategy to introduce life issues into the classroom is to prepare lessons specifically for that purpose. Such lessons could be offered between academic units or simply as a change of pace from ordinary activities. Here are examples of two such lessons, each of which could be adapted to fit several grade levels, and each of which helps students deliberate about a value-rich topic that is easily neglected in the school curriculum and yet often confuses students.

"But We've Always Done It This Way!"

1. Working alone — List some things that never seem to change much—in your life, in government, throughout history, in your family, anyplace.
2. Working alone — Then list some things that *did* change—some patterns that have shown a shift, a redirection, or perhaps termination.

3. Working alone	Now look back at those two lists, compare them, and see if you can get some clues as to what contributes to change. Make a list of a few factors that we might call "change factors."
4. In groups of three or four persons	Share what you have written with others. Then work as a group and develop as long a list of "change factors" as you can—things that help change come about. If you have time, try to classify your list into categories. Try also to get a label or title for each group of change factors. Do this as a group project.
5. In a large group	See if a few small groups would report some of their categories of change factors (and perhaps some examples of each). Keep this step brief. It should merely be a chance to give all a taste of what some of the groups were doing.
6. Working alone	Write some "I learned" statements about change factors or any other aspect of change.
7. In a large group	Have a few "I learned" statements read to the whole group—just to give a taste of what others are writing, not to settle the issue.
8. Working alone	Think of some changes you would like to make in yourself or in your surroundings. Write a few down.
9. Working alone	Apply what you have been learning about change to what you have just written. What can you say about useful ways to go about trying to make those changes? Or about things to avoid?
10. In small groups	Within your group, ask each person to say as much or as little about what he wrote as he

	likes. After everyone has presented his thoughts, the group can discuss the issue informally.
11. In a large group	Invite discussion. Anyone care to talk about change, and what he is planning to do, or not do, or anyone care to ask a question or make any other comment?

"Hunger Doesn't Go Away When You Take a Picture of It"

1. In a large group	A minilecture to the class makes these points: "Injustices usually exist in society. And typically the victims press for change. Or perhaps the advantaged person feels guilty and believes things should be changed. But change is difficult. Sometimes it means changing habits or giving up some personal advantage or just hard work. Part of us doesn't want to change. We may be content with merely expressing our concern, merely taking a picture of the problem, merely writing a report. But then if someone is hungry, he will continue to be hungry. Social injustices do not go away just because we think about them."
2. Working alone	Write your reactions to what was just said.
3. In a large group	Volunteers offer to read all or part of what they wrote.
4. In groups of three or four persons	Ask each person to read all or part of what he wrote, or to comment on the issue.
5. Working alone	Do you see yourself as doing something about some of the ills of society? What? When? Write about this. Write it clearly

	enough so that others may read it. You may or may not want to sign your name on what you write.
	When individuals are finished writing, or perhaps after they have had a chance to write as homework, they are asked to post their papers on the walls so that others may read them from time to time.
	If a paper has been signed, readers can talk to the authors about their reactions or just give them notes about their reactions.
6. (Optional step)	Large- or small-group discussions could be held at this point.
7. In a large group	As a follow-up to the above lesson, it would be useful to ask individuals to let the group know from time to time if and when they have done something to reduce a social ill. They might do this in the form of a "thought card" or a "posted note" or a "one-minute quote without a comment."

8. Encourage Students to Include Choosing, Prizing, and Acting in Deliberations

When I say that students should "deliberate" about a value topic, I do not mean that they should simply exchange prejudices and doubts. They should engage in a process that serves people much more effectively and is worth learning for its own sake. Becoming more skillful with this process is even more important than the temporary progress one makes in clarifying a particular values issue. It is the difference between learning how to fish and actually catching fish. It is the familiar difference between process and content.

What is involved in this recommended value deliberation process? Choosing, prizing, and acting are involved, and each has components. Let me elaborate on each.

Choosing

There are three elements in choosing: 1) making one's own judgments, 2) searching out alternatives in the choice situation, and 3) considering the consequences that will likely flow from each alternative. A word about each:

1. *Free choice.* Looking at this first part from its opposite side, I would say that a student would not be well prepared for value growth if he sought ways to avoid choices, perhaps by withdrawing from issues or timidly following the lead of others. I believe it is better for students to learn to weigh evidence and to make choices independently.

2. *Alternatives.* Students should hunt for alternatives when faced with a choice situation. If a student approached issues as if they were simply either/or propositions or as if all the options were already known, he would not be well prepared to deal with values issues. The

best way to find a good idea is to examine lots of ideas.

3. *Consequences.* Students should not conclude a survey of options with an impulsive or random choice. They should know how to think ahead, manipulate abstractions, make predictions about what will happen if one option or another were selected. It is on the basis of anticipated consequences, not on the basis of chance or impulse, that I prefer that students make their value choices.

Prizing

It is not enough that one's rationality be engaged in value situations. One's feelings, intuitions, and deepest senses must also be engaged if values are to be completely appreciated or fully internalized. Thus the deliberation process I recommend has an element called prizing, which asks two kinds of questions: 1) How do the options in a value choice feel to you? Or which choices are you most likely to prize and cherish? 2) Which options would make you feel most proud to stand up and announce as being your choice? Or which options would you feel most comfortable in being publicly associated with? A word about prizing and affirming.

1. *Prizing.* Students would not be well served in their value growth if they did not know how to get in touch with their emotional or intuitive preferences or to include those preferences in their deliberations. This is not to suggest that one should always choose what one *feels* like choosing. But it is to suggest that one is better served by knowing how one feels and what one's conscience may be saying than by not knowing.

2. *Affirming.* There are important advantages to students being able to share with others their personal evaluations, especially the extent to which an option feels right to them. In one sense, an opportunity to share one's values with others tests the strength of those values. When we feel proud to tell those whom we respect about a choice we made, it is a signal to ourselves that we feel positive about that choice. When we feel ashamed to tell about it, if we would rather that even our best friends knew nothing about it, it suggests that we do not feel positive about the choice. Thus, one way

to get positive feedback from our subconscious selves is to ask ourselves to what extent we would be proud of others knowing about that choice.

In another sense, the more we learn about how to share our values proudly and straightforwardly, the more informed our society's collective choices can be. The more we are able to take advantage of each other's insights and wisdom, the less likelihood of a demagogue leading us astray. Students who learn when and how to stand up and be counted for the things they believe in learn something important about making democracy work. They learn how to maximize collective support when support is available for their position and, when it is not, they learn how to take advantage of others' thoughts in making their own decisions.

Acting

Values issues are not abstract issues. They influence what we do with our limited time and energy. To divorce value deliberations from human behavior is to divorce values from the real world. So value deliberations should include the issue of "So what?" What does a deliberation mean in terms of behavior?

Looking at this from a negative perspective, I would say that students who have not learned how to take value deliberations beyond choosing and prizing, who do not ask themselves what, if anything, it all has to do with how they spend their days, have not learned complete valuing skills. I want students to be able to look at their behaviors, both their occasional acts and the general patterns of their actions, and to compare those behaviors with what their minds tell them are intelligent choices and what their hearts tell them are choices of which they can be proud. Our minds, our feelings, and our actions must be integrated if we are to live comfortable, value-directed lives.

Briefly, then, students are helped to deliberate on values isssues when they are helped to develop skills for:

Choosing—1) choosing freely, 2) searching for alternatives, 3) weighing predicted consequences.

Prizing—4) considering what one prizes and cherishes, 5) considering sharing choices and actions with others.

Acting—6) doing something about choices and prizings, 7) building patterns of life that integrate choices and prizings.

In *Values and Teaching*, which I co-authored with Louis Raths and Sidney Simon, I devoted a chapter to something we called the clarifying response, which simply encourages a person to deliberate further on something he has said or done. Let me illustrate with seven clarifying responses, one for each of the seven segments of the deliberation process listed above. Imagine that I am in a classroom, walking around while students work at their desks.

1. *Free choice.* "Did you choose that project yourself?" If I ask that question gently enough, not implying criticism, I might refresh the student's awareness of the possibilities of choosing freely. (I would accept any response with empathy and support.)

2. *Alternatives.* "What other projects did you consider before you began that one?" I might ask that to remind a student about the usefulness of searching for alternatives.

3. *Consequences.* "Were you surprised by the way that worked out or did you predict it?" I might say that to plant a seed concerning the usefulness of thinking ahead to consequences.

4. *Prizing.* "How do you feel about the way that worked out?" I might ask that when I wanted to increase student awareness of what is prized and cherished.

5. *Affirming.* "Want to share what you just told me with others sometime?" That response may raise the question of whether the student feels good enough about his thought to share it and, if so, how he might manage that sharing.

6. *Acting.* "Do you really want to do something about that idea you expressed, or are you just thinking about it?" That reminds a student that action is a part of value deliberation.

7. *Building patterns.* "I notice that you typically finish your projects well before they are due. Is that a pattern that you are proud of, I wonder?" That clarifying response is meant to invite a student to deliberate about a pattern in his life.

9. Expand Awareness of Consequences

This ninth principle focuses attention on one of the elements of the deliberative process mentioned above, that of thinking ahead to consequences. First some perspective.

It is easy to stew in frustration when we see a young person acting with grand disregard for the consequences of his behavior. The person may be leaving materials messy. Or stealing. Or refusing to invest energy in work. Or driving recklessly. Or violating health requirements. Or ignoring social responsibilities. We are quick to carp, "Can't you see what will happen? What if everyone did that? Stop and think about the consequences of your acts." Remember hearing that message yourself when you were younger? It's not usually a very productive message, I'm afraid. But what else might an adult do when consequences are disregarded?

One option is so obvious that it is often overlooked: We might stop to consider whether or not something is pushing the student to disregard consequences. Too often, alas, we will find that he is full of anger or is feeling aimless and hopeless or is otherwise without the patience necessary for careful deliberations about future events. So the first step is diagnosis. Are some current emotions pre-empting thoughtfulness—and perhaps even encouraging destructiveness?

Even persons who are not emotionally preoccupied will sometimes not stop to look ahead as far as they might. This might be because we have not encouraged the anticipation of consequences more frequently or exemplified it more consistently. How might one do this?

- When reading a story, ask students about the extent to which a character thought about consequences before acting.
- Ask students to keep a consequence diary. "Keep track of all the times next week when you stop, think ahead, and then decide to do or not to do something."

- From time to time, have the class develop a list of possible consequences. "What will happen if we do this? If we don't do it?" "What would have happened if this machine had not been invented?"
- Talk about experiences in your life when you did or did not anticipate consequences accurately.
- Have students list three alternative choices in a problem situation (academic or personal) and then give some key predictable consequences for each choice.
- Play some "guess what will happen" games in which the winner is the person who most fully anticipates the consequences of some action, experiment, or decision.
- Talk aloud about a decision while you are making it, mentioning the consequences that come to your mind, so young people can see the process in action. One might say, for example, "If we stop the discussion now we will probably forget about the issue. If we continue, some people will get bored. Now let's see, what outcome do I think is preferable? . . ."

Such activities bring the idea of consequences to the attention of students. Some activities also give students practice in anticipating consequences. But we can do more. We can help students understand and appreciate more of the tangle of consequences that exist in our complex world. We can expand their awareness of the range of effects that emanate from our everyday acts. The trick to doing this is to talk to students about those types of consequences which they can appreciate.

To identify which consequences students are capable of appreciating, we might look at the developmental sequence in which people typically acquire such understandings. This sequence, outlined below, is my interpretation of the research reported by Lawrence Kohlberg and his colleagues (which is summarized in *Educational Leadership*, October, 1975).

Levels of Consequence Awareness

1. *Unaware of consequences.* Very young children are largely

unaware of the consequences of their acts. Impulsiveness is the mode.

"I just did it because I wanted to."

2. *Punishment.* Soon children become aware that they might be punished for their acts. Especially if they feel vulnerable, they will tend to be obedient and to defer to power once they reach this level of awareness.

"I don't want to get into trouble."

3. *Self-interest.* Next there is an awareness of one's self-interest, of what meets personal needs, of what gives gratification. Immediate gratification is often sought first at this stage. Awareness of the needs of others is also growing, but others are mostly used for trading off pleasures; the focus remains on self-interest.

"I need others to take care of me."

"I helped you last time. This time you should help me."

4. *Approval from others.* Next a clear awareness that others observe us and judge us develops, and with it comes an interest in winning the approval of others. Now one can find satisfaction in being seen as a "good guy" or a "good girl." Also, one can now appreciate more of others' internal states and can thus consider the consequences an act might have on another's feelings as well as on one's own.

"I hope I was a good boy today."

"Sally was trying to help us even though she messed up the game."

5. *Stability and structure.* The next element added seems to be an awareness of social structures and the importance of those structures in controlling behaviors. People who have reached this level refer to specific rules and sometimes place great value on law and order. They are often ready to punish those who violate stability. The interest is in keeping things steady rather than in progress. People at this level can appreciate the importance of loyalty to one's group.

"Everyone should believe in the Ten Commandments."

"We've got to have law and order."

6. *Individuality.* Human variability seems to be the next element. One begins to appreciate persons different from oneself. There is a willingness to bend laws to allow for individual needs and to change individual laws to better meet the needs of the group. Freedom becomes highly regarded. It all comes with a flexibility and an openness to change not seen at earlier stages. There is more tolerance for ambiguity and uncertainty and respect for the processes by which issues are resolved. Due process and rational deliberation come to be seen as more important than existing laws or rules.

"We should all cooperate and decide what's best."
"There are exceptions to every rule."

7. *Complex wholes.* We next see a new respect for interdependence. One's view reaches for comprehension of all life. One sees that any individual's rights are dependent on the integrity of the complex whole. Persons who reach this level are able to feel the nobility of personal sacrifice performed for the good of the whole. They may feel proud to defy a law for a greater good. Often they can verbalize personal principles of life. No longer is law or even collective decision making seen as paramount; personal integrity and conscience are viewed as even more fundamental.

"I try to live by treating others the way I would
want others to treat me if our positions were reversed."

Studies of people in many cultures verify that they typically progress through the six stages one at a time and that the order of progression is the same for everyone. Occasionally, people get stuck at one stage and never grow to the most comprehensive levels.

Research indicates that the best way to help a person move toward those more comprehensive levels is to identify the maximum level the individual can currently grasp and then to bring to his attention ideas from the next level. Thus a person who has achieved level three understandings, for example, would be best helped to grow by discussing ideas from level four. The strategy is to lead a person ahead gradually and sequentially.

If, for example, I found children thinking on the punishment level (level one), I might look for an occasion to talk about the needs

individuals have to find satisfactions in their lives or about how we all can help each other to be happy (level two). Because of the developmental nature of these understandings, I would expect that those level two ideas would be the next ones ready to be grasped.

If I were talking to a child who seemed to appreciate his self-interest, but not anything more (a level two person), the next time an appropriate topic or issue emerged I might ask him about being liked or approved by others, or whether or not he cared about that. Since my intent would be to stimulate awareness and to invite growth (not to force change or to embarrass the student), I would do this non-judgmentally.

If students and I were talking about stealing and the students took the position that it's all right as long as everybody else is doing it (level three), I would talk about the importance of laws (a level four idea). If the students were already able to appreciate these ideas, I would move to level five and talk about the advantage of not being arbitrary but of examining each stealing incident and the individuals who were involved before making a final judgment. If the students were already able to appreciate individual variability (level five), I would raise the issue of how stealing should fit into the whole picture of human relationships and whether students believe that something more comprehensive should replace the absolute "Thou shall not steal."

This developmental-growth approach to consequence appreciation aims to expand people's awareness gradually. The assumption is that the more consequences we can understand and consider when we make value judgments, the wiser our judgments can be.

To expand the range of consequences students appreciate, we can, as illustrated above, carefully select the consequences we point out on the basis of the stage students have already reached. But we can also promote growth by having students discuss morally problematic situations in which they must balance several pros and cons to reach a judgment. Then we can focus their attention on the consequences that would ensue from alternative actions and ask students to judge the worth of those consequences.

If we can organize such discussions so that they proceed calmly, so that students argue less and listen more to each other's positions and reasoning, we can expect the mature students to communicate relatively mature consequence awareness, anticipating that those expressions will have a leading effect on the thinking of the less mature students. Fortunately, when students share thinking, the lower-level students tend to grow; the higher-level students do not tend to regress. Of course, it remains the teacher's responsibility to lead the thinking of the most mature students, unless, as often happens, those students read or otherwise interact often enough with ideas more advanced than their own.

Teachers might also consider having all students fill out worksheets from time to time to prompt them to consider ideas from various consequence levels. This is another way to bring advanced levels to their attention. Here is one example.

Should I Help Out?

Imagine that a teacher asked you whether you wanted to help some other students. And imagine that you are trying to decide if you do want to help them.

Here are six things to think about. Put a check mark by the one thought that would be *most like yours.*

1. ____ Will I get punished if I don't do it?
2. ____ What's in it for *me*? Will *I* get help when I need it?
3. ____ If I help them, will the other students end up liking me more?
4. ____ Is there a rule about helping in situations like this one?
5. ____ What is best for all of us, all things considered?
6. ____ As I think about this situation, and the kind of person I want to be, what is the best thing for me to do?

Share your responses with some others. See if you can understand why others checked different things.

Now, after you have had more time to think about this, go back to the original list. Want to change your check mark? Also, write a little

about what you would *like* to be able to do, regardless of whether or not you would do it.

A final word about this notion of expanding a student's awareness of consequences. This principle has much to do with the expansion of awareness of life itself; the more nuances of life we can appreciate, the more we will be able to weigh the consequences of different behaviors. Of course, one of the best ways to expand a person's awareness of life is to involve him in examples of the arts and humanities with which he can connect emotionally, intuitively, or intellectually. That, after all, is what the arts and humanities are all about—messages about humanness. The finer the example, the deeper or broader or finer is the message communicated. I mention this because some schools are moving away from the arts and humanities. I would want to reexamine any such trend in my school, especially to make sure that it is not a result of poor teaching, the exposure of students to examples of arts and humanities with which they cannot easily connect, or the use of teaching methods that do not expand awareness as much as they dull interest in the subject. Artists have exquisite messages about life for us, well told. It is painful to see those messages fogged by pedantic study.

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10. Be Forthright About Your Own Values

Earlier I mentioned the usefulness of displaying your values. I would add a recommendation that you also speak of your values, explaining how you justify them, what consequences you believe they serve, and what other alternatives you have considered. After all, we sometimes ask students to speak of their values. It would not be fair to refuse to speak of our own. And we want students to learn how to stand up and affirm their values so that people can learn from one another, so we, too, must publicly affirm our values.

But I caution you not to speak of your values outside of a context that makes such talk natural. Students will hear you better if they do not perceive you as someone going out of the way to sell a set of values but simply as an adult speaking up about a values issue because you care about it and because you want to share your thinking with others. So be natural, not manipulative, about presenting your views.

I also caution you not to give more rationale for your values than the students can be expected to apprehend. That means don't give a long lecture. And it means don't linger on consequences that will sound like gibberish because they are on levels well beyond the comprehension of students. Talk of reasons that encourage student deliberation.

And a third caution: Speak of your values as personal properties. Do not speak of them as absolute and eternal goods, as if all persons at all times would be foolish not to adopt those values. Rather than say, "X is valuable because. . .," use a qualifier such as: "*I think* X is valuable because. . . ." If you want to be particularly careful that students do not cease their value deliberations simply because you have stated a position, consider informing students that you will speak of your values *after* they have concluded their deliberations.

Or try phrases such as these:

"The way I see it. . . ."

"Although others disagree, it seems to me that. . . ."

"I may someday change my mind, but I currently believe. . . ."

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11. Develop Skills for Managing Inner Processes

We usually do not make wise value judgments when our insides are rattling around distractingly. The clashing gears, sickening exhaust fumes, and unending conflicts of our hustling, bustling, jostling society seem to promote internal upset. Or perhaps it's just that we notice our inner disturbances more lately. It may be that now is the time in the world's evolution to attend more to our inner processes, so that we are more aware of what goes on inside us. After all, the first tasks of humans are necessarily those of physical survival, and it is only recently that we could feel relatively confident about managing those tasks. Perhaps now we can more fully attend to managing the environments inside us.

It is clear that if we help students develop skills for settling their internal distractions, for calming everyday anxieties, and for letting emotions and intelligence flow comfortably, we will be releasing more energy for thoughtful reflection on values issues. Because strategies for training students in such inner management skills are becoming increasingly available, this is not a fanciful principle to implement.

You might try some of the meditation methods or yoga exercises now being popularized. Experiment to find ways to help your students calm their inner processes. One of the exercises I sometimes use to relax a group in preparation for work goes like this:

1. Close your eyes and notice your breathing. (Pause.) Notice your breath coming in and going out.
2. Now try to breathe more deeply and slowly. Try for deep, yet natural, breathing.
3. Become aware of the energy flowing inside your body. Sense where the energy flows most strongly. Don't try to control it. Just observe.

4. Let the energy flow more strongly, if you can. (Pause.) Then take a few deep breaths and try to relax your whole self. Let your body become easy.

5. When you are relaxed, open your eyes. Take your time. When everyone is about ready, I'll start us on our work for the day. But don't rush yourself. Let your body become easy before you open your eyes.

12. Communicate Hope and Trust in Life

It is fashionable to talk about the state of society's confusions, the dreams that never worked out, the problems that continue to nag us, the world's dangers, and apathy. We readily complain about the unsteadiness all about us. I would prefer, and I recommend that you consider, focusing instead on the opportunities these changing times provide us. After all, the old ways did not work so perfectly. Hunger and warfare are yet to be abolished. In many ways it is fortunate that the old assumptions are loosening their hold on us and no longer seem so compelling. This affords us a greater opportunity to approach the future with a clearer vision. And this is the particular quality of our times that we should emphasize to ourselves and to our young people, I believe. To emphasize our lost hopes and promises is to nourish gloom and drain our energies.

Thus I prefer to talk not about value confusion, but value evolution. I'd rather not bemoan the passing of fine craftsmanship, for example, but instead to ask how we can regain some of it without sacrificing the advantages of mass production. And I'd rather not leave Nellie stewing with her value uncertainties but instead help her think them through and see that she can build her own life. In short, I prefer that we view the current situation with more hope than regret. It points us in the only direction we can go—forward. And it increases the likelihood that when we get where we are going it will be a better place.

Where one gets hope is another question, and a real one. It will do little good to pretend. Some of us will find hope in identifying with nature, in the sense that we are all part of something larger that is essentially beautiful and right. Some of us will find hope in science, in appreciation of how rationality can lead us to better worlds. Some of us will find hope in religions, public or private, in knowledge that one can be adrift in this world yet confident of the future. Each of us

must tap the powers of hope where we find them and carry to our children as much of them as we can.

This brings me back to the opening paragraphs of this fastback, with the circle of my thoughts about values development completed. I leave it to you to fill in the circle with whatever meanings and clarifications you can get from these pages. Good luck.

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